

T H E
NATURE, DESIGN, and GENERAL RULES
O F T H E
POOR'S FRIEND SOCIETY

Instituted at BRIDLINGTON January 1st, 1793.

I was a Stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me. I was sick and ye visited me.
Matt. xxv. 35.—See also 1 Tim. vi. 17. 1 John iii. 17. Ja. i. 27. Isa. lviii. 10.

NOTWITHSTANDING the best parochial regulations, we generally find a great number of Individuals suffering under Want and Distress. This, perhaps, arises either from their improvident Conduct, the scantiness of their Parish allowance, or their aversion to an Hospital; and frequently in the most inclement season, we see the poor Labourer, the support of a numerous Family, deprived of every mean of sustaining them, for want of employment. But whatever may be the cause of *Distress*, the Objects of it are certainly entitled to sympathy and relief from every Person of christian and humane feelings.

To these, we may add another description of Persons equally miserable: frequently do we find, by unfortunate causes, our fellow mortals cast amongst us, destitute of the Necessaries of Life, without Friends, and STRANGERS in the place: These poor hopeless Objects are surely entitled to our most feeling regard.

With these Ideas, a few friends of suffering Humanity, have united themselves in a Society, each contributing *monthly* according to his ability, in order to relieve the STRANGER, with the sick, distressed and afflicted POOR, resolving not to be influenced by the former causes of present distresses, nor the Sect or Party to which such afflicted Persons belong: a *sufficiency* of evident *Distress*, being alone, the only

necessary recommendation of the Object.

To add to the miseries of the Poor, we generally find them destitute of the knowledge of true Religion, and the comforts consequent upon it; a strict attention will therefore be paid to the eternal interests of those who may become the Objects of this Institution, by instructing them in the principles of the Religion of Christ, and the duties respectively incumbent on them.

Every friend to Humanity and Religion must with great pleasure hear of the success, with which Institutions of a similar nature have been blessed in different parts of this Kingdom: Numbers have, by the benevolent influences of those Societies, been rescued from *untimely* deaths; and many, very many, have been brought to a knowledge of God, and died happy.

Without mentioning these instances as Demonstrations, the utility of such an establishment must immediately present itself to every thinking Mind, and it is hoped it will meet with due support from every friend to God and Man. To carry this design into execution, Subscriptions will be necessary, therefore, those who desire to befriend the friendless, and succour the distressed, are earnestly solicited in its behalf.

The GENERAL RULES.

I. THAT out of the Subscribers, a Committee be appointed to visit the POOR, and that they be such as are capable of instructing those they visit, in the way of Righteousness, and praying with and for them.

II. That they diligently and *impartially*, seek for those who stand in the greatest need of help; and relieve them according to their necessities, and bring their report to the next monthly Meeting.

III. That two Stewards be appointed, to take care of the Money and

keep the Accounts; one of whom to be changed every half Year.

IV. That proper Books be provided, in which regular entries of all Receipts and Disbursements shall be made; which Books shall stand open for the inspection of the Subscribers, and the Public.

V. That the Committee of this Society meet, the *first Monday* in every month, at eight o'Clock in the Evening, in the Vestry adjoining the METHODIST CHAPEL, in BRIDLINGTON, where Donations or Subscriptions will be received.